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ABSTRACT

Through the comparison of two induction models, the present study addressed changes in novice teacher attitudes toward teaching, program elements, and the relative merit of involvement of the university in induction programs. In terms of attitudes toward teaching, postinduction scores of novices participating in the formal team model (N=14) were significantly higher than those for the novices using the buddy system model (N=12) in the areas of teacher rapport with principal, curriculum issues, teacher status, community support, and community pressures. In addition, postinduction interviews and field note data indicated that effective induction programs feature the identifiable elements of structure, emphasis on assistance rather than evaluation of the novice teacher, and careful selection of the mentor teacher. Regarding the role of the university in induction programs, data indicate that participation of a representative of higher education on the induction team contributed to the overall effectiveness of the program. By providing an additional role model for the beginning teachers, by assisting in the development of the program and its implementation, and by providing a resource outside the public school system, the representative of higher education provided a link between the public schools and the university in assisting beginning teachers. A postinduction interview form, "Structured Interview Protocol," is included in the appendix. (Author/IAH)

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Strengthening the Team: An Inclusive Model of University/School District Support for Novice Teachers

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Abstract

Through the comparison of two induction models, the present study addressed changes in novice teacher attitudes toward teaching, program elements, and the relative merit of involvement of the university in induction programs. In terms of attitudes toward teaching, post-induction scores of novices participating in the formal team model were significantly higher than those for the novices using the buddy system model in the areas of teacher rapport with principal, curriculum issues, teacher status, community support, and community pressures. In addition, post-induction interviews and field note data indicated that effective induction programs feature the identifiable elements of structure, emphasis on assistance rather than evaluation of the novice teacher, and careful selection of the mentor teacher. Regarding the role of the university in induction programs, data from the present study indicate that participation of a representative of higher education on the induction team contributed to the overall effectiveness of the program. By providing an additional role model for the beginning teachers, by assisting in the development of the program and its implementation, and by providing a resource outside the public school system, the representative of higher education provided a link between the public schools and the university in assisting beginning teachers.

Strengthening the Team: An Inclusive Model of University/School District Support for Novice Teachers

It is well documented throughout the literature that beginning teachers experience many difficulties during their initial year of teaching which if unaddressed can prohibit them from reaching their full potential as professional educators (Elias, Fischer, & Simon, 1980; Godley, Klug, & Wilson, 1985). In response to this heightened awareness of the needs of novice teachers, many states and individual school districts have developed and implemented programs for educators in their initial year(s) of teaching (Hawk & Robards, 1987).

The present study was undertaken to determine which type of program for novice teachers would be most effective if implemented in southeastern Idaho. Among the issues considered was that of the importance of university participation in providing support programs for beginning teachers.

Adult Learning Revisited

In order to provide assistance to beginning teachers, it is necessary that they be open to suggestions and information given to them by their mentors--those individuals involved in the induction process who are selected for the specific purpose of providing guidance to the initiate. Regardless of the configuration of the specific model adopted for induction, all models provide at least one individual who is designated to mentor the novice. This mentor must have the necessary skills to work with beginning teachers in a manner that is not only supportive and caring but provides objective insights into teaching behaviors exhibited by the mentee as well as student behaviors encountered. The mentor is most commonly an experienced teacher

who is selected for the task on the basis of proven expertise in the field of education and willingness to assist others (Hawk & Robards, 1987; Gray & Gray, 1985). In addition, more than one mentor can be assigned to a beginning teacher to comprise a cadre or team of individuals available to aid the initiate as in the Oklahoma Entry Year Assistance Program (King, 1984).

According to Daloz (1987), successful mentoring requires openness on the part of both mentor and mentee in communication of the needs and expectations of the novice who is formulating his/her responses to the new situation in which mentoring is taking place. Of the models for adult learning which Daloz (1987) considers appropriate to examine in terms of mentoring, perhaps Kegan's model (as cited in Daloz, 1987), the "Helix of Evolutionary Truces," is the most applicable to the teaching profession. As Daloz (1987) explains, individuals who are in the process of attending college are passing through Kegan's "interpersonal stage" and moving on to the "institutional stage." The interpersonal stage is characterized by concern with group membership and group loyalty. Authority is not questioned during this stage, and individual action is dependent upon acceptance by group norms. As students become exposed to new ideas during their college experiences, they become open to these influences and allow those ideas to affect them in their perceptions of the world and decision-making processes. Following completion of their education, many individuals again become closed to new ideas and influences, entering Kegan's "institutional stage" (Daloz, 1987).

Following Daloz's (1987) interpretation of Kegan's model, this closing

down and entering the institutional stage should follow the student teaching experiences which culminate in graduation from college for the majority of individuals entering the teaching profession. If openness to new ideas, influences, and perceptions is a prerequisite to successful mentoring, delay of entrance into Kegan's institutional stage is of utmost importance.

Socialization of Beginning Teachers

The work of Lortie (1975) has been instrumental in explaining the phenomenon of "work socialization" or the enculturation of novices to the realities of teaching in the classroom. Etheridge (1989) brings additional insights concerning this process in which socialization is described as a two-way phenomenon involving active participation on the part of the novice. Socialization is accomplished through rising to the day-to-day challenges encountered in the classroom through a process of "strategic adjustments" (Etheridge, 1989) made to meet those demands. According to Etheridge (1989), strategic adjustment requires exchanging the teacher's present practices in particular situations for others which may or may not be sanctioned by authority but are viewed by the novice as necessary to bring about resolution. The adjustment process is described by Etheridge (1989) as selecting, processing, and utilizing information from both the university and school environments to make teaching choices. The university learnings are preferred, but when judged as not applicable due to the particular school situation, other less desirable alternatives are selected.

Included in the role of mentor is the provision of support for the mentee and opportunities to relay alternate strategies for problem-solving

to the novice teacher throughout the initial year(s) of teaching (Godley, Klug, & Wilson, 1987). Many times mentors act as sounding boards for their mentees, listening to their frustrations and guiding them toward an understanding of the teaching process as a whole. Assisting initiates in the work socialization process is an important part of the mentor's role, a part which hopefully allows novices opportunities to be reminded of or learn new, more successful strategies for resolving difficulties encountered in the classroom (Godley, Klug, & Wilson, 1987).

Finally, socialization of novice teachers involves movement toward professionalism. Five factors are identified by McLaughlin and Yee (1988) as necessary for professional growth and a sense of efficacy: (1) resource adequacy, (2) an integrated school environment, (3) a collegial environment, (4) having a problem-solving orientation, and (5) being investment-centered rather than payoff-centered. Any model adopted for the induction of new teachers should address methodologies to encourage professional growth of initiates.

Purpose of Study

In an effort to identify a model for induction which would be workable for the southeastern Idaho region, a study was undertaken to examine two models utilized to provide assistance to novice teachers. One model consisted of a formal structured induction program utilizing a team approach (mentor teacher, administrator, and representative from higher education) to work with beginning teachers. The second model was an informal buddy system approach to providing assistance to beginning teachers. Through both qualitative and empirical means, the following questions relative

to university participation in induction programs were addressed:

1. What are the comparative effects and outcomes of the two programs with regard to attitudes toward teaching of participating novice teachers?

2. Are the benefits derived from participation in a loosely conceived buddy system model versus a tightly conceived team model substantial enough to warrant the recommendation of one approach over the other?

Procedures

The present study addresses one component of a comprehensive project comparing and contrasting two induction models (Klug & Salzman, 1990). Subjects of the study consisted of 26 novice elementary school teachers from three public school systems in southeastern Idaho. Two of the school districts were rural with a combined school population of 4,130 students, and the third district represented a small city district with a school population of 13,216 students. Faculty populations in participating schools ranged from 8 to 40 teachers with an average of 20 teachers.

During the first year of the study, 8 of the novice teachers were in their first year of teaching while 9 were in their second year of teaching. Nine first-year teachers participated during the second year of the study. The total sample of beginning teachers included 25 females and one male ranging in age from 20 to 45 years. It should be noted that not all of the individuals asked to participate in the study from the original population of beginning teachers did so. Approximately 40% of the individuals who were requested to participate refused to do so on the grounds that they had completed student teaching and did not feel that the extra assistance to be provided by the program would be beneficial.

A total of 14 of the 26 novice teachers were randomly assigned to the team approach while 12 were randomly assigned to the buddy system approach. Beginning teachers who participated in the study represented a range of teaching abilities from average to superior as judged by their student teaching supervisors. All study participants, regardless of induction model, completed the academic year and, thus, the study.

The novice teachers and mentor teachers assigned to the buddy system approach were directed by the principal investigator to meet with each other periodically (no number of hours required) to discuss problems which the beginning teacher may be experiencing. No further directions were given. The novice teachers and members of the team approach model were given extensive directions on the number of team meetings to be held throughout the year (four), the number of formal observations to be made of the beginning teacher's teaching (four by each team member throughout the year), and the number of hours that the mentor teacher was to spend working with the novice teacher (72 throughout the year). Novice teachers in both models completed the Purdue Teacher Opinionaire (Bentley & Rempel, 1980) pre and post induction and were also interviewed post induction by four trained investigators using the structured interview protocol which appears in Appendix A. The principal investigator acted as a participant observer in the study in the role of representative of higher education on the induction teams. Transcripts of the interviews and field notes made by the principal investigator were later analyzed employing methods recommended by Bogden and Taylor (1975) and Pelto and Pelto (1978) for qualitative research studies.

Results

Analysis of the study data consisted of two procedural levels. First, pre- and post-program mean difference scores on the Purdue Teacher Opinionaire for the buddy system group and the team approach group were computed and compared. Second, data from the post-program interviews and field notes were qualitatively analyzed in order to formulate hypotheses regarding the induction process. These analyses yielded data relative to the dimensions of attitudes toward teaching, induction program elements and characteristics, and the relative merit of involvement of the university in induction programs for novice teachers.

Attitudes Toward Teaching

Table 1 presents the mean difference scores for the team approach group and the buddy system group on the ten subscales of the Purdue Teacher Opinionaire. For both groups, mean difference scores were in a positive direction on 8 of the 10 subscales, indicating more positive attitudes of novice teachers following induction regardless of the model utilized in the areas of teacher rapport with the principal, satisfaction with teaching, rapport among teachers, teacher load, curriculum issues, teacher status, community support, and community pressures. In addition, for both groups, mean difference scores were in a negative direction indicating more negative attitudes for novice teachers in the areas of teacher salary and school facilities and support services regardless of the induction model utilized.

One-way analyses of variance were conducted in order to investigate if mean difference scores of the buddy system group and the team approach

Table 1

Mean Difference Scores: Purdue Teacher Opinionaire Subscales

Subscale	Team Approach		Buddy System		*F*	p
	$\bar{X}$	SD	$\bar{X}$	SD		
Teacher Rapport with Principal	+.386	.279	+.202	.169	4.24	.05
Satisfaction with Teaching	+.169	.154	+.110	.178	1.92	.15
Rapport Among Teachers	+.237	.223	+.188	.161	1.76	.19
Teacher Salary	-.346	.379	=.285	.331	2.02	.10
Teacher Load	+.236	.237	+.181	.187	1.73	.20
Curriculum Issues	+.662	.562	+.430	.362	7.84	.01
Teacher Status	+.378	.379	+.220	.168	4.31	.05
Community Support	+.431	.401	+.245	.379	4.24	.05
School Facilities	-.385	.260	-.185	.118	6.39	.05
Community Pressures	+.500	.465	+.280	.274	7.83	.01

on each of the ten subscales were significantly different. Results of the ANOVA's are presented in Table 1. Mean difference scores of the team approach group were significantly greater than those for the buddy system group on five subscales of the Purdue Teacher Opinionaire: (1) Teacher Rapport with Principal ($F = 4.24$, $\rho < .05$), (2) Curriculum Issues ($F = 7.84$, $\rho < .01$), (3) Teacher Status ($F = 4.31$, $\rho < .05$), (4) Community Support ($F = 4.24$, $\rho < .05$), (5) Community Pressures ($F = 7.85$, $\rho < .01$).

The mean difference score for the team approach group on the School Facilities subtest was also significantly greater ($F = 6.39$, $\rho < .05$) than the buddy system group, but in a negative direction. Thus, in the area of school facilities, novice teachers participating in the team approach demonstrated more negative attitudes following induction than novice teachers enrolled in the buddy system approach.

Induction Program Elements

Data from the present study support formulation of the hypothesis that effective induction programs should feature certain identifiable elements. These elements include structure, emphasis on assistance rather than evaluation of the novice teacher, and careful selection of the mentor teacher.

In their post-induction interviews, novice teachers participating in the buddy system approach said that because the approach lacked structure it was confusing for both the novice and mentor teachers. According to the novice teachers in the buddy system approach, clear goals should be mutually established with the mentor teachers. Moreover, definite meeting times with the mentor teachers need to be scheduled providing opportunities

for the mentor to make suggestions and give general support to the novice teacher.

Novice teachers involved in the induction team approach reported that all elements of the program should be retained, including formal committee meetings, formal observations by team members, and a commitment of a set number of hours to be spent with the novice teacher by the mentor. According to the induction team participants, assistance rather than evaluation of the novice should be emphasized. While the administrators were viewed by the novice teachers as important members of the team, many teachers were unsure if the principals were serving as evaluators or advocates.

Feedback from participants in both induction models indicated that the mentor teachers should be chosen carefully. According to the novice teachers, the mentor should be someone they trusted and with whom they could share concerns and someone who would be willing to take time to listen and provide ideas, support, and possible solutions to problems. In addition, the novice teachers felt the mentor should be an individual who has a similar philosophy regarding teaching or who would respect the novice teacher's philosophy. Finally, a similar grade-level teaching assignment or experience was cited by novice teachers as a criterion for selection of a mentor.

Role of the University

Regarding the role of the university in induction programs, data from the present study indicate that the representative from higher education contributed in ways that were different from other members of the team.

She assisted in not only the development of the program and trouble-shooting activities to maintain the program, but also contributed much in the way of knowledge concerning the mentoring process to other members of the induction teams, particularly to the mentor teacher. Areas that were shared by the university representative with the mentor teachers concerned the types of problems encountered by beginning teachers, advice that could be given to beginning teachers who were encountering difficulties with students, parents, or colleagues and administrators, and research-based strategies that could be employed in the classroom.

In addition, the representative of higher education acted many times as a sounding board for the beginning teacher concerning the program and mentoring process, especially in the first months of the school year before novices had established trust with other team members. Because the university representative was from outside the school district, the mentee could make comments regarding difficulties or disappointments encountered within the school system itself (that's not the way they taught us it would be in college!) in a safe environment. Drawing upon her specific training in the area of supervision, the university representative could also make more objective observations regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the beginning teacher and his or her perceptions of self as teacher within the school system. In addition, the university representative kept in touch with administrators and mentor teachers regarding the induction program for specific individuals who were experiencing more difficulties than others adjusting to the induction process.

The representative of higher education worked directly with novice teachers as a member of induction teams and in doing so made additional resources available and provided novices with information regarding the acquisition of materials and media. This university representative also served as a third role model for the novice of someone who was committed to the field of education and enthusiastic about its prospects for the future.

On several occasions the representative of higher education was able to communicate directly with administrators on teams about situations that were impeding the progress of beginning teachers. Administrators may have been unaware of these situations due to the reluctance on the part of beginning teachers to approach administrators. Most often these problems dealt with children in the classroom who had difficulties that were outside the norm and who needed additional resources than could be provided by the beginning teachers. Many times teachers were afraid to approach administrators becuase they did not want to be viewed as incompetent by their principals. Moreover, beginning teachers often perceived these problems to be caused by their lack of teaching experience rather than due to the students' difficulties in coping with learning environments.

Summary of Results

In summary, interview and field-note data indicated that the more structured team approach model was preferred by the participants. Teachers involved in the study cited the following reasons for superiority of the model: (1) elements built into the model and overall structure of the model; (2) access by the novice teacher to three resource individuals

rather than one; and (3) increased collegiality of team members and participants.

In terms of attitudes toward teaching, novice teachers, regardless of the induction model, obtained higher post-induction scores on the Purdue Teacher Opinionaire subscales of teacher rapport with principal, satisfaction with teaching, rapport among teachers, teacher load, curriculum issues, teacher status, community support, and community pressures. Post-induction scores for the team approach group, however, were significantly higher than those for the buddy system group in the areas of teacher rapport with principal, curriculum issues, teacher status, community support, and community pressures.

Through the participation of the representative of higher education on the teams, the university was able to make a contribution to the overall success of the induction program for beginning teachers. By assisting in the development of the program and with its implementation, by becoming an additional mentor for novice teachers, and by providing a resource outside the public school system, the representative of higher education provided a link between the public schools and the university in assisting beginning teachers to make the transition from their roles as university students to public school teachers.

Discussion and Implications

While the perceived superiority of the team approach model over the buddy system approach cannot be attributed totally to the university's role in the team model, the probable influences cannot be discounted. The university representative on the team played an important part in the

overall success of the model in (1) providing a third role model for the beginning teachers; (2) assisting the beginning teachers in their development as fully invested professionals indicated by their changes in attitudes toward teaching; (3) acting as an additional mentor for the beginning teachers, especially during the beginning of the academic year when novices had yet to establish a trust relationship with other members of their teams; (4) providing objective views of the initiates as "teachers" in light of knowledge of what is defined as good teaching; and (5) providing reminders of research-based practices to influence the novices' teaching.

Perhaps most important, the university representative was able to provide inservice to the other members on the teams concerning the difficulties likely to be encountered by novice teachers and to address the mentoring process and what it entails. There was also increased dialogue between university and school-based personnel which led to improved understandings regarding the nature of the teaching process as understood by both institutions.

An additional implication from the present study is the influence of having an individual on the team from outside the public school setting participating in an otherwise school-based process. Outside participation in itself may have lent formality and increased structure to the team approach model, leading to the perceptions of its being a superior model in other ways. Furthermore, continued university affiliation by novices may be enough to assist beginning professionals in remaining "open" to new ideas, suggestions, and perceptions concerning the teaching process and their own teaching, delaying their entrance into Kegan's "institutional" stage.

The positive outcomes noted in the present study suggest that the team approach to the induction of new teachers in southeastern Idaho was indeed strengthened by the participation of a representative of higher education in the program. In developing programs to meet the needs of novices in the field, state departments of education and universities should not overlook the wealth of resources that are present in colleges of education. In turn, colleges of education should not hesitate to commit their resources to such endeavors, realizing that the benefits to be gained from such participation are extremely valuable to the future of education. Furthermore, university participation in induction programs encourages development of our knowledge of how beginning teachers can be assisted towards becoming outstanding professionals.

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Appendix A

Structured Interview Protocol

_____ Grade level taught

_____ School District

_____ Number of teachers in school

_____ Number of years teaching experience

_____ Age

Name _____

_____ Number of students in classroom

1. Describe the induction model in which you have been involved for this study.
2. At which point in time do you feel beginning teachers would most benefit from this type of assistance? Why do you feel this way?
3. Describe the types of problems with which you received assistance during the past year.
4. Describe the types of suggestions you were given during the past year.
5. How much time did your teacher consultant spend with you during the past year?
6. Was the assistance provided to you during the past year adequate?
7. Did you feel the assistance provided to you was valuable to the development of your teaching competencies?
8. What suggestions do you have regarding the induction program?
9. What advice would you have for anyone who might be invited to participate in a similar program?
10. Do you have any additional comments you want to make?